



State Personnel NEWS

A news quarterly for and about
Georgia State Employees



VOLUME 22, No. 1

February 1998

Privatization has impacted many state departments

Privatization of state government made news again in January when the Stone Mountain Memorial Association (SMMA) gave the nod to Silver Dollar City, Inc., from Branson, Missouri, for the operation of commercial activities in the park. They will manage the overall lease and are responsible for all retail operations, special events and all current and future attractions. Four partners make up a consortium that will be running the park. Besides Silver Dollar City, the Marriott Corporation will be responsible for lodging, golf and tennis. Zoo Atlanta will develop an Ecocenter and manage the Wildlife Preserve and Petting Farm. The fourth member of the consortium is the Stone Mountain Memorial Association (SMMA). They will maintain the natural district, control parking and tram prices, and approve any future development.

"Of former Stone Mountain state employees, 83 per cent are still working within the consortium at the park" according to Jack Morris, Silver Dollar City's public relations director. Morris himself was one such employee with more than 13 years with the association. "All employees are going through extensive professional and motivational training to become proactive in assuring guests enjoy their visit to the park" said Morris.

One might wonder, why open up to the private sector at all? One answer- and it goes for many of the operations turned private - is that the state should not be in a particular kind of business. For example, should the state be running a resorts like Stone Mountain or Lake Lanier Islands? A major reason for privatization in this case was that needed long term park improvements will cost millions of dollars. This revenue will now be provided from private funds, not the state of Georgia. There are many, many angles from which to look at the decisions being made.

Forrest Burson, director of the **Office of Adoptions** says "absolutely no social service worker jobs

were lost because of privatization and we have doubled the number of licensed adoption agencies under contract with us."

"absolutely no social service jobs were lost because of privatization..."

Their mission is to develop and implement an efficient, quality, outcome based program that will focus on the development of private, licensed agencies as resources, and identify and eliminate barriers to adoption. All of this will serve to reduce the case load of state workers while at the same time, giving more and better services. In using both private and state case workers, a partnership has developed that allows for sharing of ideas and community resources. As a result of this collaboration, 83 more children were placed this year over this same time last year.

Meanwhile, over at the **Georgia Building Authority**, the folks who are responsible for security, maintenance, grounds keeping, food services, recycling and housekeeping, have outsourced services - some to supplement current services, or to streamline operations and to help free up employees for more pressing duties. It allows them to "flex and focus as needed" says **Julie Kerlin**, GBA public relations coordinator. Some of the things outsourced have been custodial and maintenance work (all these employees were reassigned within the department), as well as carpet laying, major or large renovations, and some painting. Reductions in staff reflect privatization as well as attrition, downsizing and redirects. Kerlin also said there are instances where, upon evaluation, outsourcing was not economically sound and was not done.

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Recently operations as Stone Mountain have been awarded to a consortium.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Commission Celebrates "A Day On, Not A Day Off"

The Martin Luther King, Jr., State Holiday Commission began celebrating Dr. King's birthday on January 16. The capitol rotunda was crowded with students, legislators, the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor, the Shamrock Middle School choir, reporters and lots of just plain folks. All came to hear first hand remembrances of Dr. King, and to see awards given in his name and spirit. The occasion was festive, solemn, happy and sad.

Governor Zell Miller, who instituted the holiday and created the Holiday Commission, praised King for his vision, compassion and contributions to our state, country and our world.

Ms. Rita Samuels, a member of State Holiday Commission, ac-

cepted the proclamation from Governor Miller. She praised not only Dr. King, but Gov. Miller as well. **Eldrin Bell**, Commissioner, MLK, JR., State Holiday Commission, praised Dr. King and the Governor, also.

Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, **Robert Benham**, who received the MLK Jr. Distinguished Service Award, remembered his first meeting with the then 16 year old Martin, who was already a sophomore in college. They demonstrated together even though "Alabama State Troopers on golden palomino ponies" ran at them.

Judge Benham said he followed in the philosophical tradition of Dr. King and became a judge, not

to change the world or to right all of the wrongs or even to look back. Instead, he entered the legal profession to honor that part of the constitution that says all men are created equal.

John and Betty Pope received the Humanitarian Award for many contributions to the state including a home for retired ministers and a million dollar endowment to the Rosalyn Carter Institute.

Representative Calvin Smyre, chairperson of the MLK, Jr. Georgia State Holiday Commission presided over the ceremonies.

The Shamrock Middle school sang a number of selections.

The ceremony was a moving one and those in attendance heard words of praise and hope.

Even with the loss of some jobs at The **Department of Corrections**, the news is good. Three new prisons are being built by private sector companies in southeast Georgia. They will be owned and operated privately and will be under contract with the state to provide prison services.

“No state jobs were lost here...”

"No state jobs were lost here and hundreds of new jobs will be created in the communities where these prisons are being built" said **Michael Light**, information officer for the department.

There was a call for proposals for transitional and diversion center services. Through RFP's (request for proposal), the department found out that they were already doing the best job at the lowest price. Nothing was privatized or outsourced. Again, no jobs were lost.

Teachers working for the department, however, did not fare as well. Two hundred thirty -five full time positions were eliminated. Two things influencing this loss were downsizing and the implementation of new distance learning technologies according to a department spokesperson. So, there are budgetary and technology factors, not just privatization affecting decisions. Teaching positions are now part-time, many of which

were filled with previous employees. Also, inmate legal services had been contracted through the University of Georgia and now are under contract to a private law group.

Some changes have been misinterpreted as privatization as in the case of the closing of Brook Run. It was closed because of the demand by consumers and advocates for services in the community, not in institutions. Consumers were relocated to other state facilities-including the Gracewood State School and Hospital in Augusta and Georgia Regional Hospital Atlanta. People were allowed to choose whether they went to private or public centers. About half went to private provider residences. Five private, financially sound providers were selected. One of the requirements of the RFP was for providers to have a line of credit at a bank to ensure stability of funding. This eliminated Community Service Boards from the proposal process. **Sonia Kuniarsky**, of the **Dekalb Developmental Disabilities Council**, pointed this out after a recent meeting of the GMHI Oversight Committee (formerly the Brook Run Oversight Committee). Brook Run was closed, not for privatization, but because mental health services are shifting from institutions to communities as part of the state wide reform that began with passage of HB100. "It is what consumers want" she said.

The same things hold true for the Georgia Mental Health Institute in Atlanta. With legislative approval, GMHI will probably close June 30

of this year.

" The object is never to outsource or privatize if the project already meets objectives in the best manner and at the best cost. "

Clyde Manning, director of privatization at the **Office of Planning and Budget**, says much of the fear about privatization is unfounded. As he explained it, every project is analyzed. This internal scrutiny allows management to fine tune the overall efficiency of their departments.

"The object is never to outsource or privatize if the project already meets objectives in the best manner and at the best cost."

Some decisions will be made that look like privatization. On closer inspection, the decision may be based on any number of factors, such as budget cuts, or as in the case of Brook Run, because of a shift in the way services are delivered.

In the news now is Atlanta's water and sewer system and the Equestrian Center in Conyers. Each will have its own litmus test and each will draw much attention. Some jobs may be lost. Change is not always easy. It is a sign of the times in government and business.

STATE PERSONNEL NEWS

Volume 21, Number 3

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Marti Fullerton appointed as new Commissioner of Labor

Martha P. "Marti" Fullerton was appointed by Governor Miller to be the new Georgia Commissioner of Labor. Former deputy commissioner of Labor, Fullerton replaces David Poythress, Commissioner from 1992 until his resignation in January.

A native of Hayesville, N.C., she lived and worked in the metro area for about 30 years and now lives in Rockdale County. She attended Young Harris College where then-professor and state Sen. Zell Miller was her teacher. She later attended West Georgia College and Florida State University. Fullerton has worked in various capacities of state government. She was press secretary and administrative assistant for 16 years to then-Lt. Gov. Miller, and as deputy commissioner of the Labor Department from 1991 to 1997. She was responsible for safety and inspection programs, legislative affairs, facilities management, labor information systems, marketing and special projects, private sector employer committees and Executive Commitment to Ex-

cellence in Leadership (EXCEL) program, a voluntary leadership training program.

Since April of 1997, Fullerton has served as an executive assistant to Governor Miller, with responsibilities for working with several state agencies, such as sheriffs and chiefs of police, and city and county government officials.

The State Labor Commissioner is an elected official responsible for overseeing all duties performed by the labor department. The department is responsible for administering the state's unemployment insurance; supervising operation of the federal Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA) program in Georgia; assisting those who are seeking jobs and aiding employers in their search for qualified workers; administering laws relating to working conditions, employee safety and child labor; and gathers, maintains and reports labor market information.

Team effort raises \$7.6 million for Wildlife Program

"Developing the *Give Wildlife A Chance* commemorative license plate was one of the best team efforts ever in the history of our division," said **David Waller**, director of the **Wildlife Resources Division** of the **Georgia Department of Natural Resources**.

"This project caught everyone's

groundkeeper at the Nongame-Endangered Wildlife facility in Forsyth, who really saved the day. She said the time and effort Mr. Woodward put into getting tags distributed was invaluable to the project's success.

Georgia's Nongame-Endangered Wildlife Program depends on vol-

unteer license plate design in 1997. (Revenue brings out a new design every five years.) And, by the end of the year, a tag was ready, the promotion and marketing had been done, and county tax offices were awaiting citizen's requests.

"Our first step in the process was to decide which species to feature on the tag and commission the artwork," Ms. Bohannon said.

A committee made up of division staff selected the top six paintings, which, including the winning bobwhite quail, featured a screech owl, a hummingbird, a bluebird, a wood

duck, and a gray fox. Then, Ms. Bohannon said, they developed a ballot and began asking people to vote for the one they liked best.

"We asked people for their opinions about the six paintings at such places as the Atlanta Flower Show and the Buck-a-Rama, an exhibition for hunters. We canvassed the state, going to locations frequented by people interested in nature and the outdoors," she said.

The winning painting was a watercolor by Mrs. Margaret Marcom, a south Georgia resident who has been painting wildlife and nature scenes for many years. The now familiar scene of a bobwhite quail in flight through a stand of longleaf pines was the hands down choice, not only for its beauty but also because it so aptly symbolizes the value of wildlife and the need for wildlife conservation, according to Ms. Bohannon.

"Longleaf pine forests are one of the most endangered ecosystems in the Southeast. This rapidly vanishing habitat is home to hundreds of species, including the bobwhite quail," she said.

After selecting the artwork the next step was to work with a (continued on page 5)

During a recent visit to a PreK classroom, Gov. Miller (who began his career as a teacher) captivated four year olds with a reading of an old favorite, *The Little Engine That Could*.

Governor's PreK program wins national award

Governor Miller's new Prekindergarten program was one of 10 national winners of the Innovations in American Government awards presented last November in Washington, D.C. Innovations in American Government is an awards program of the Ford Foundation and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government.

The awards are given to recognize and foster creative leadership and excellence in government. In addition to the recognition, each winner also receives \$100,000 from the Ford Foundation.

Celeste Osborn, director of the **Governor's Office of School Readiness**, the agency that administers the PreK program, said that the Ford Foundation requires winners to use the award money to promote the message of effectiveness in government.

"Winning this award will allow us to disseminate information about our program and provide insight to states on how it can be replicated," she said.

Georgia's PreK program is the most comprehensive four year old public preschool program of its kind in the nation. Ms. Osborn said Georgia reaches more four year olds than any other state.

"Our goal is to provide four year olds with the experiences they need to be ready for kindergarten. Many evaluations have shown that children who have attended prekindergarten have higher academic and social ratings by their kindergarten teachers than those who haven't attended," she said. "Other studies also indicate that children who enter kindergarten ready to learn are much more likely to succeed in school."

Since the program's pilot year in 1992-93, it has become a model for the nation. It has been featured on ABC's *World News Tonight*, NBC's *Nightly News*, CNN's *Future Watch*, and the *Lehrer News Hour* on PBS.

Money from the Georgia Lottery pays for the PreK Program. Attendance is voluntary, and children attend at no cost. Prekindergarten programs may be offered at local public schools or through private child development centers. They usually operate on the regular school system calendar, and children attend for the length of a typical school day.

The program has grown from the 750 preschoolers who were enrolled during the first year to the current statewide enrollment of 59,000. PreK is now available in all except Putnam and Talliaferro counties.

interest and imagination and had all of us pulling together to make it a success," he said.

And it has, in fact, already been an overwhelming success. Mr. Waller said that by the end of April 1997 (the first year the tag was for sale) 550,000 had been sold. Sales of the tag during 1997 brought in \$7.6 million for the **Nongame-Endangered Wildlife Program**. Fourteen of the \$15 cost of the tag benefits the Nongame program; \$1 goes to the county in which it is sold.

"We had projected that we would sell 100,000 tags the first year, and to sell 550,000 in the first four months of the year really had us scurrying around," said **Jeanne Bohannon**, Nongame Program spokesperson and marketing coordinator for the tag. "By January 3 some counties had sold out of tags. Everybody in the division got involved in shifting tags from counties that had plenty to counties that had run out."

Ms. Bohannon said that while division staff from law enforcement, fisheries and other units pitched in to help get tags to counties that needed them, it was **Mr. Ted Woodward**, a part-time

voluntary contributions for most of its budget, according to Ms. Bohannon. The program receives only .7 per cent of the Wildlife Resources Division annual state budget. Some federal money is received for endangered species, but that money must be matched by private donations.

Currently about \$900,000 must be raised each year to fund nongame wildlife conservation projects, which include such activities as bald eagle restoration, cataloguing reptiles and amphibians, protecting and monitoring sea turtle populations, manatee tracking, mapping the migration and distribution of breeding birds, and managing wildlife habitats.

Many interested citizens volunteer to help with wildlife conservation projects, and it was actually a volunteer who proposed the tag idea. From that idea Director Waller, Assistant Director **Larry McSwain**, Nongame Program Manager **Terry Johnson**, and "tag team" members **Jeanne Bohannon**, **Jennifer Anderson**, **Dottie Head**, and **Beth Brown** set to work early in 1996 to get a tag ready to coincide with the Georgia Department of Revenue's introduction of a new



Magic Kingdom Membership
Offered to State Employees

The State Council for Personnel Administration is now offering free membership to Walt Disney’s Magic Kingdom Club. This gives employees free and exclusive benefits, values and advantages not offered to the general public.

Membership cards are issued to employees upon request and extend membership in the club to cardholder spouse and dependent children. The person whose name appears on the membership card need not be present for a family member to use the card.

The membership application (or the required information contained in a memorandum) must be submitted to the appropriate person listed below, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope (\$1.01 postage on a business envelope). Cards will not be issued without a self addressed envelope.

Employees of any state agency (other than DHR) who do not see their department contact listed below should send their requests to :

Karen Davis-Thompson
Georgia Merit System
200 Piedmont Avenue,
Room 504, West Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Magic Kingdom Card Request

Sponsored By The State Personnel Council

Please include a self-addressed envelope (\$1.01 postage on a business envelope) with this request to receive your club card, membership guide and price list. The membership application must contain this information:

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Employees of DHR/MH/MR Hospitals should contact their personnel offices.

If cards are not available, requests should besent to the above address.

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Dekalb County DFCS
178 Sams Street
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Macon, GA 31201

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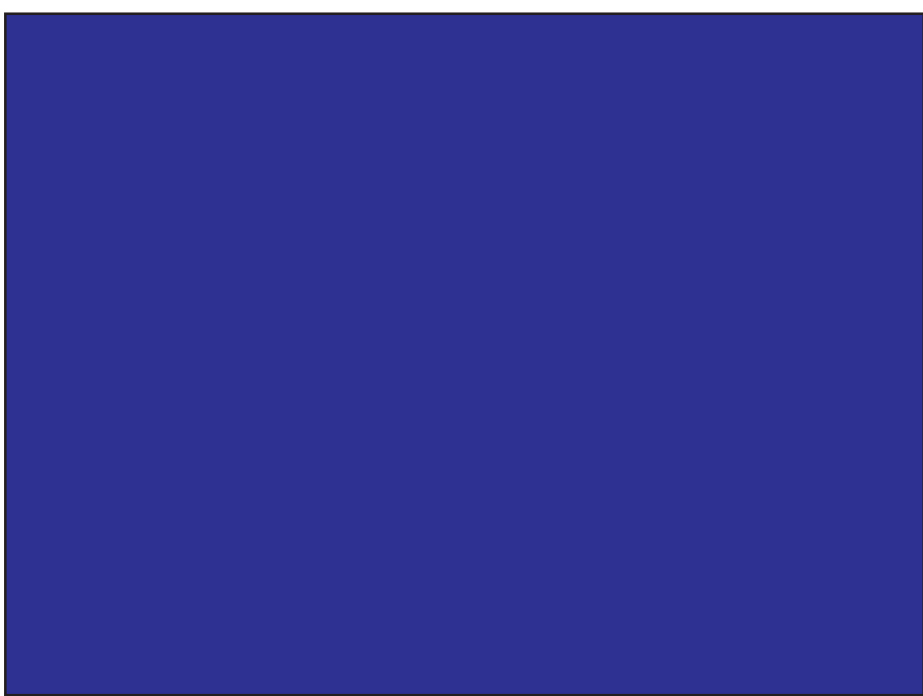
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Jan O’Hara Defense P.O.Box 17965 Atlanta, GA 30316	Susan Romsiewicz Medical Assistance #2 Peachtree Street 39th Floor Atlanta, GA 30303	Fatisha Watts (all technical schools) Adult Education 1800 Century Place Atlanta, GA 30345-4304
Cynthis Moss Education (no local school sys- tems) 205 Butler Street Suite 2052, East Tower Atlanta, GA 30334	Toni Stewman Pardons and Paroles 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Suite 116, West Tower Atlanta, GA 30334	Human Resources Employees of the Department Human Resources who do not see their office listed below should send their requests to:
Diana Buttram GA Student Finance Commission 2082 E. Exchange Place, #200 Tucker, GA 30084	Pat Mullinax Natural Resources 205 Butler Street Suite 1258, East Tower Atlanta, GA 30334	 Vivian Duncan 2 Peachtree Street Room 28278 Atlanta, GA 30303



Former State Labor Commissioner David Poythress, second from the left, recently presented letters of commendation to three Georgia Building Authority (GBA) police officers. They were cited for apprehending a suspect who was caught stealing computer equipment from the Labor Department's central office. The officers, left to right, are Sgt. Melvin Ballard of Clayton County, Officer Donald Brooks of College Park, and Investigator Darell Martin

Three Building Authority police officers are everyday heroes

Three Georgia Building Authority policemen proved too much for a computer thief. During the month of December, the Sussex complex (Headquarters of the Labor Department) was hit with a series of thefts. Missing were computers and related equipment. **Officer Donald Brooks** of College Park, **Sgt. Melvin Ballard** of Clayton County and **Investigator Darell Martin** of Dekalb County are all heroes. And they were just doing their jobs.

On December 19th, the first night of the surveillance, while hiding in the parking lot, Brooks saw a custodian make three trips to his car and put large trash bags in the trunk. Brooks then notified **Sgt. Robert Steede** of his observations. Steede, **Officer R.D. Harper** and **Sgt. Melvin Ballard** all met at the site to continue investigating.

Upon arrival, the exits of the building were quickly secured and the supervisor of the custodial crew was ordered to have the suspect report to the security desk. When the suspect came downstairs pushing a trash barrel, Brooks and Steede stopped him. At about this time, Ballard found a large trash bag in the barrel containing computer equipment. They searched the suspect's car and found three more trash bags containing computer equipment.

Investigator Martin, a 20-year veteran of

the Detroit Police Department before moving to Atlanta, arrived on the scene to interrogate the suspect. He had been monitoring the investigation from the outset, and discovered the suspect was wanted in four other thefts. He was also able to recover a \$5000 laptop computer previously stolen.

Former State Labor Commissioner **David Poythress** cited these fine GBA policemen for their work. "I commend you for your excellent police work" he said. "Your work has saved the taxpayers of Georgia thousands of dollars and made our offices more secure. I speak for the entire staff of the Georgia Department of Labor in telling you how much we appreciate and respect your efforts and dedication."

All three security officers were quick to praise the GBA as a great place to work. **Officer Brooks** previously worked for the Henry County Police Department, where he worked for 10 years, before coming to the state a year and half ago.

Sgt. Ballard has worked for the state six and half years, the last five years with GBA. Said Ballard "I like working for the Building Authority and during the time I've worked here, I've seen some very positive changes and I enjoy the opportunity of growing with it." He is married and has three daughters.

Charitable Contributions Program is a success

On December 10 Charitable Contributions coordinators from state agencies, colleges/universities and community service boards across the state gathered in the Floyd Room at the Twin Towers in Atlanta to report on the progress of their 1997-98 campaign. The results of which will benefit over 1,000 charitable organizations participating in this years campaign.

This years campaign theme "Hand to Hand - Catch the Spirit of Giving" gave campaign planners the idea of using Beanie Babies and Bean Sprouts for campaign coordinators to report on campaign results. As attendees arrived for lunch, each representative was given a Bean Sprout to deposit in Santas's gift box as they made their report. At the end of the event, the Sprouts were donated to a local day care center, along with proceeds from a silent auction for the Bean Sprouts. Children from the day care center attended the luncheon and delighted the crowd with a medley of songs. **Richard Jones, Department of Labor**, also entertained the crowd with holiday songs.

Slightly over \$1 million dollars was reported at the luncheon. However, several of

the largest contributors to the Charitable Contributions Program were not represented. This year's campaign goal is \$2.5 million. That goal is expected to be met when all of the reports are received. Look for final campaign totals for your agency, as well as designation totals for the participating charities in the April issue of *State Personnel News*.

Bell South has once again donated two Governor's Cup trophies to the Charitable Contributions Program. These trophies will be awarded to the department/community service board and college/university with the highest contributions per employee, adjusted for the average agency, community service board college or university salary. This performance formula makes it possible for organizations of different sizes to compete for these trophies. Beginning this year, the trophies will be awarded for one year until the next year's campaign winners are determined and then they will go to the the current years winners. Governor's Cup winners will also be announced in the next issue of *State Personnel News*. Look for the winners in April.

Wildlife continued from page 3

graphic artist to translate the watercolor to a four-color design that could be reproduced on a license plate. Mr. Bohannon explained that the reproduction on the tag captured the essence of the painting, but that some of the subtleties of the original work were naturally lost during this process.

Other states have produced wildlife auto tags to raise money for their nongame-endangered wildlife programs, but Georgia has raised more money by far than any other state. Ms. Bohannon attributes this to the beauty of the design, to their making the availability of the tag known to citizens, and the collaborative efforts of county tax offices and the Department of Revenue. The Nongame Program hopes to sell an additional 50,000 tags this year.

The General Assembly established Georgia's Nongame-Endangered Wildlife Program in 1988 and, like similar programs in other states, designed it to be supported through private donations. The state income tax checkoff (taxpayers can check a box on their tax returns to donate \$1 to the program) was once the primary source of funding for the Nongame Program, but Ms. Bohannon said contributions have declined drastically in recent years. The money collected from this source dropped from \$500,000 in 1992 to \$189,000 in 1995.

The other major organized source of revenue for the program has been an annual Weekend for Wildlife fundraiser. The Nongame Program has hosted this event, which is underwritten by corporate and individual

sponsors, for the past 10 years. An auction of such things as trips, artwork, and tours donated by businesses and individuals is the main fundraising tool of the event. She said Weekend for Wildlife raised about \$180,000 last year.

The Georgia Protected Species List currently includes 111 animals and 103 plants. A species is protected because it is endangered, threatened, unusual, or rare. Ms. Bohannon said that by the year 2000, Georgia will have lost more than two million acres of prime wildlife habitat.

"As their habitats vanish, many of our state's most beautiful and fragile creatures are in danger of extinction. Our ability to conserve, manage, and protect our wildlife depends on the success of fundraising activities like the Wildlife tag," she said. "We are grateful for the way citizens have supported it."

Entertainment

Alert

The State Employees Credit Union is sponsoring another fantastic spring event at---

SIX FLAGS

Don't miss the fun, the low prices, the short lines, the new rides, and new shows. Watch *State Personnel News* or your agency newsletter for updates on this program.

After April 1, 1998 you may call State Employees Credit Union (404) 656-3748 or 1-800-659-7328 for updates.

Betcha' didn't know. . .

Brenda James Griffin, director of public affairs for the **Department of Agriculture**, has been appointed to the Welfare Reform Advisory council. The purpose of the council is to review implementatin of the new Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) procedures, to recommend changes that will further promote self-sufficiency, and to pinpoint areas for further study.

Cameron Smoak, assistant commissioner of the **Consumer Protection Division**, is the 1997 recipient of the University of Georgia Agricultural Alumni Association Distinguished Service Award. This award recognizes employees who have distinguished themselves through professional achievement, community involvement and service to UGA.

Dr. Lee Brooks, state veterinarian and assistant commissioner of the **Animal Industry Division**, is president elect of the American Association of Food Hygiene Veterinarians.

Bob Lazenby has been appointed Deputy Director of **Georgia Forestry Commission**. He was formerly the state coordinator of forestry information and education. Lazenby is a graduate of the University of Georgia School of Forest Resources and has been with the state since 1971.

Leadership America has selected **Dotty W. Roach**, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Administrative Services, as a member its Class of 1998. She is one of only 100 women from across the United States who were recently chosen to participate in the organization's year-long series of professional development sessions.

Each Leadership America class brings together women from diverse geographic, ethnic, cultural, and professional backgrounds to explore explore critical issues facing women, our nation, business, and education.

The *Farmers and Consumers Market Bulletin*, the state's most popular newspaper, is now available via the World Wide Web! The 80 year -old *Market Bulletin* is receive by more than 80,000 Georgians weekly and is often referred to as the "state's weekly agricultural Bible." Access it by going to the Department of Agriculture's home page at <http://www.agr.state.ga.us>



Georgia Public Broadcasting gets new building and state-of-the- art equipment

The lucky employees of Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) now go to work every day in a spacious, new five-story building that has been outfitted with state-of-the-art, all digital TV and radio equipment.

GPB's new \$26 million facility is located at 260 14th Street in Atlanta and was officially dedicated Nov. 19 by Gov. Miller. With 227,000 square feet of space, the new building is more than four times larger than the old Stewart Avenue facility, according to Werner Rogers, executive director of GPB. The old building had been in use since 1968 and was adequate when it was built.

GPB began life in 1963 with one instructional television station. Today, GPB consists of Georgia Public Television, a nine-station network; Peach State Public Radio, currently

with 13 stations; and PeachStar Education Services, which provides instructional programming via satellite link to every elementary, middle, and high school in the state, as well as technical schools, public colleges and universities, and public libraries.

"Money from Georgia's lottery bought the land and paid for the GPB building," Dr. Rogers said. "The new digital equipment that makes GPB the most technologically advanced public television and radio facility in the nation was funded by legislative appropriations and general obligation bonds."

He said the building has three major TV production studios, all with audience seating capacity. The largest studio can seat 250 and is the largest TV production studio in the Southeast. Six distance learning studios, three major editing suites, and one major audio production suite make up the television facilities.

Radio facilities include one live performance studio, three major broadcast studios, four editing suites, and a 10,000 compact disc music library.

Dr. Rogers said GPB's completely digital video and audio equipment and production capabilities will attract corporate and individual producers. Expanding services in this area will bring in revenue that will allow them to produce more of their instructional programming. Although GPB now buys about 65 percent of its PeachStar programming, its programs for Georgia classrooms — such as Georgia Stories, Irasshai: Japanese Language and Culture, and Salsa, an elementary Spanish series — have won national and international awards.

The GPB building is located in an area that is emerging as the telecommunications center of Georgia, according to Dr. Rogers. It is next door to the new Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technology (GCATT) building, a research operation with more than 300 telecommunications scientists and engineers. Georgia Tech, AT&T, and Turner Broadcasting are nearby and offer diverse opportunities for partnerships with GPB.

For more information contact Nancy Hall at 404-685-2415.

Video Explains Driving Law to Teens

The Governor's Children and Youth Coordinating Council has produced a 30-minute video called *Driving Ambition*. The video explains the new driving law that went into effect in July 1997. It emphasizes those portions of the law that particularly affect teens, such as the curfew for young drivers and the requirement that teens have to be in school or have graduated to keep their licenses.

Judy Neal, executive director of the council, said that *Driving Ambition* is meant to convey to teens Gov. Miller's belief that "a license to drive is a privilege that will be taken away — swiftly and surely — if it is abused by speeding, by drinking or drugs, or just plain recklessness or carelessness."

Driving Ambition was broadcast Dec. 30 in prime time by TV stations in eight Georgia cities. It was also broadcast in prime time on Georgia Public Television and transmitted via satellite to middle and high schools in January.

THE ATLANTA HAWKS SALUTE GEORGIA'S STATE EMPLOYEES AT THREE GREAT GAMES AT THE DOME

Saturday, February 14, 7:30 P.M. , Indiana Pacers
\$35 seats, Section 128, Rows 33, 34, *special \$25.50*
\$30 seats, Section 131, Rows 21,22,23 *special \$22.50*

Sunday, March 29, 3:00 P.M., Detroit Pistons
\$35 seats, section 122, rows 28,29&34,35 *special \$25.50*
\$30 seats, section 117, rows 17,18,19 *special \$22.50*

Sunday, April 19, 3:30 P.M., Miami Heat
\$35 seats, section 123, rows 30,31,32 *special \$25.50*
\$30 seats, section 117, rows 16,17,18 *special \$25.50*

Order your tickets now to allow time for tickets to be mailed!
Include a self addressed, stamped envelope for return of
tickets. Make checks payable to State Personnel Council and
mail to-

State Personnel Council
P.O.Box 347206
Atlanta, GA 30334

*** No walk-in ticket sales. Tickets subject to availability.**

Department:_____

Name:_____

Day Phone:_____ Home Phone:_____

Saturday, Feb. 14, Hawks vs. Pacers
Number of tickets _____ X Price \$ _____ = Subtotal: \$ _____

Sunday, March 29, Hawks vs. Pistons
Number if tickets _____ X Price \$ _____ = Subtotal: \$ _____

Sunday, April 19, Hawks vs. Heat
Number of tickets _____ X Price \$ _____ = Subtotal \$ _____

Total number of tickets:_____ Total Price: \$ _____

Any Questions?

State employees call and write the Merit System with their questions. Here's a sampling of recent questions that we've been asked.

Question: I received a net raise of \$48.90 a month in October. My supervisor explained to me that any more would have put me over my maximum salary. What does a cost of living increase have to do with maximum salary?

Answer: The increase you received on October 1, 1997, was a performance increase. Cost-of-living increases are no longer given. However, pay grade adjustments are anticipated each year to help keep state salaries in line with the overall job market. The 1997 pay grade adjustment, effective Oct. 1, was 2.5 percent. Employees who met expectations and whose salaries were at the maximum for their pay grade received the increments that were added to the pay scale because of the 2.5 percent pay grade adjustment. Employees cannot receive increases that would cause their salaries to be greater than the maximum for their pay grades; but they can receive the adjustment to the pay grade when their job performance meets expectations.

The Merit System will annually review the pay plan and recommend a pay grade adjustment to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. A three percent pay grade adjustment was suggested for 1998.

Question: I received a Met Expectations rating on my performance appraisal, but I got only a three percent raise in October. I read in State Personnel News that employees who got a Met Expectations rating would receive a four percent increase. I have talked with two coworkers, and they say their raises were three percent. Why did we get only three percent?

Answer: Agencies were authorized to award increases based on the employee's performance and the agency's fiscal resources. The policies state in part that "If a review of the department rating distribution indicates that awarding increases as specified in Paragraph 1 would result in expenditures in excess of budgeted funds, a department head may reduce the increase awards. The reduction amount shall be the same number of increments or percentage for each performance rating category and shall be applicable to all employees of the department."

Your agency did determine that funding was not available to award increases at the recommended levels. Increases were reduced by the same percentage for all employees of your agency.

Question: Do I have to call NurseCall 24 before I go to the emergency room?

Answer: No. If you are a Standard or High Option plan member, you make the decision regarding use of an emergency room. However, if you do decide to call NurseCall 24 and one of the nurses refers you to the emergency room based on your symptoms, then the \$50 emergency room deductible will be waived. Remember also that this deductible will be waived if you are admitted to the hospital, have surgery in the emergency room, or if your personal physician sends you to the emergency room.

If you are an HMO member, be sure to check the policy of your particular HMO. Unless you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, HMOs typically require that you receive a referral from your doctor prior to an emergency room visit.

Please keep in mind that NurseCall 24 is a full-service program that provides numerous services. You can, for example, call the program 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to have a registered nurse answer any medical question you have. This service is at no charge to you.

NurseCall 24 also offers a free self-care guide, literature, and an audio-health library with hundreds of cassette tapes. You are encouraged to make a call and take advantage of all these free services.

Education's "Good Gal" awarded to McMurtry

The **Department of Education's** "Good Gal/Guy" award goes to the employee who has shown outstanding commitment and dedication to service.

Amy McMurtry was chosen for the last award. With 25 years service, she's an valuable resource for the superintendent's HELP DESK. She was chosen for her expertise, people skills and willingness to always help. When anybody wants to know anything about education in Georgia, the common response is "ask Amy."

Georgia Merit System Training Calendar

Open (Interagency) Sessions March-June 1998

GMS courses are offered statewide and are open to all government employees. Registration for GMS training is coordinated by agency Training Officers. In addition to interagency courses, the Georgia Merit System provides training through closed sessions. These are courses conducted for a single agency to meet the specific training needs of that organization. Closed courses can be customized to meet an agency's objectives. Course descriptions, the price list for both closed and open courses, and registration forms are available from Agency Training Officers and the GMS Training and Organization Development Division. This same information can be found on the the GMS website on the Internet under "Agency HR Support Net" at: **www.gms.state.ga.us on EMC2 at calendar.sms.**

Management and Supervisory Development

- A Team Approach** ---- (2 days)(\$100) ----- March 11-12 Decatur, March 24-25 Albany, June 16-17 Columbus
- ADA Awareness: A Manager's Perspective** ---- (.5 day PM)(\$35) ---- June 24 Decatur
- Building Commitment** ---- (1 day)(\$50) **NEW** ---- June 4 Decatur
- Conducting Effective Employee Interviewing** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- April 1 Macon, June 10 Tifton, June 18 Decatur
- Dealing with Difficult Employee Behavior** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- March 23 Albany, June 19 Decatur
- Developing People** ---- (1 day)(\$50) **NEW** ---- June 3 Decatur
- Ethical Considerations for Government Managers** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- April 8 Decatur
- Georgia Performance Management Process Training** ---- (3.5 days)(\$19) ---- March 17-20 Thomasville, April 14-17 Columbus, May 19-22 Augusta, June 2-5 Macon
- Implementing Change in the Workplace** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- April 7 Decatur
- Managing Change** ---- (2 days)(\$200) ---- March 26-27 Decatur
- Managing Conflict in the Workplace** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- April 9 Decatur, April 22 Savannah, June 11 Tifton, June 17 Decatur
- Managing a Diverse Workforce** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- May 12 Decatur, June 9 Tifton
- Managing the Troubled Employee** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- June 25 Decatur
- Project Management** ---- (3 days)(\$300) ---- June 9-11 Decatur
- Respect and Responsibility-A Positive Approach to Discipline** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- April 2 Decatur, April 21 Savannah
- Supervising in a Challenging Environment** ---- (3 days)(\$150) ---- May 12-14 Waycross, June 2-4 Rome, June 9-11 Augusta

Secretarial and Support Staff Development

- Effective Telephone Management** ---- (.5 day)(\$35) ---- April 30 Decatur
- Human Relations Skills for Secretaries** ---- (2 days)(\$100) ---- May 26-27 Decatur
- Setting Up and Maintaining Office Files** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- May 28 Decatur
- Sharpening Your Proofreading Skills** ---- (3 days)(\$170) ---- May 12-14 Columbus, May 19-21 Decatur, June 16-18 Thomasville
- Time Management for Secretaries** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- March 5 Decatur

Communication Skills Development

- Communication: It's More Than Talk** ---- (2 days)(\$100) ---- March 16-17 Decatur
- Make an Effective Presentation** ---- (4 days)(\$235) ---- June 22-25 Decatur
- The Path of Dialogue** ---- (2 days)(\$200) ---- April 23-24 Decatur
- Writing That Works** ---- (1 day)(\$70) ---- March 19 Decatur, April 15 Decatur

Workplace Skills Development

- ADA Awareness: An Overview** ---- (.5 day AM)(\$35) ---- June 24 Decatur
- Evelyn Wood Reading Dynamics** ---- (1 day)(\$135) ---- May 28 Decatur
- Meeting Customer Needs** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- April 16 August, May 7 Gainesville, May 27 Decatur
- Performance Management Tools (PM Tools)** ---- computer based (1 day)(\$40) **NEW** ---- March 3 Decatur, May 5 Decatur, June 9 Decatur
- Recognizing and Avoiding Sexual Harassment in the Workplace** ---- (.5 day)(\$35) ---- April 23 Decatur
- The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People** ---- (3 days)(\$240) ---- April 28-30 Decatur, June 16-18 Macon
- Stress: How to Recognize and Control It** ---- (2 days)(\$100) ---- April 8-9 Decatur, April 14-15 Augusta, May 5-6 Gainesville
- Time Challenges/Time Solutions** ---- (1 day)(\$50) ---- May 5 Decatur

Quality Service Georgia Training Series

- Introduction to Quality** ---- (.5 day)(\$35) ---- March 18 Decatur
- Consulting Skills for the Quality Advisor** ---- (2 days)(\$100) ----May 20-21 Decatur

Training Seminars by Satellite

AMA's 11th Annual Briefing for Secretaries and Administrative Assistants(1 day) Watch for details-April 22 in 5 cities